THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various;—that the mind
Of desultory man, studious of change,
And pleas'd with novelty, may be indulg'd.
COWPER.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

MISCELLANY.

MR. OLDSCHOOL,

THE high respectability and extensive circulation of The Port Folio, cannot fail to excite desire to be classed among its contributors. Under this impression I have ventured to prepare for the inspection of its editor, a small essay upon a subject never before to my knowledge treated upon —the cause of diffidence. How far I have succeeded in a just description and investigation of the matter, I leave to the judgment of others.

Being myself doomed to the innumerable disadvantages and painful occurrences which are the concomitants of this debility of constitution, I conceive myself better capacitated to enter upon an inquiry into its cause, than those who have experimented its effects.

And, firstly, I shall give a brief description of its character, and endeavour to discriminate between diffidence arising from constitution, and that resulting from bad breeding or ignorance; for however intimately they may approach, how nearly soever their appearance may coincide, there is, notwithstanding, a very material difference, though, through the obscurity of it, we often class the man of understanding and knowledge with the illiterate who bears a like ensign. Attentive observation however may perceive the contrast. Diffidence proceeding from constitutional debility, exhibits a character which bears some resemblance to reservedness arising from an apprehension of superiority; and yet unless we suffer ourselves to be thought sullen or offended, by altogether disregarding conversation and adhering to an entire neutrality, we shall unavoidably be deemed ignorant and ill bred; for, by uniting in the mirth of a company without contributing any towards it, to laugh when others laugh, and be governed in action by them throughout, makes a person beyond almost every thing appear ridiculous. If, on the contrary, we attempt to mix in conversation, our discourse is so incorrect, the oratorial part so mangled, that what we say appears but a concatenation of nonsense. This is the destiny of such poor creatures as debility of constitution has doomed to bear the burthen of diffidence. But thanks to the inventer of letters and him who brought out of the womb of obscurity the art of communicating ideas by signs, the diffident man, though debarred from the pleasures of society, and cut off from the joys of conversation, may, notwithstanding, enter his study, and not only retrieve his character from the imputation of clownish ignorance, but demonstrate to the world the extent of his under-

standing, and teach the polite votaries of fashion that not knowledge but ability is wanting to appear in the most strict conformity to the laws of good breeding and politeness.

Diffidence from bad breeding, as I have already mentioned, is very similar to the same affection resulting from weakness of constitution. Perhaps the principal difference is to be discovered in the degree of silence or neutrality observed in company. A clown, to use a familiar phrase, is led almost entirely by the nose. Inattentive to his own mind and concerns, he keeps a watchful eye to the aspect of the company, following their example with the nicest precision. When mirth sits predominant, his distorted countenance bears unequivocal indication of the faithfulness of his attention, and his sage phiz, equally declares the subject of conversation.

It is now time to enter upon the inquiry into the cause of diffidence. We may remember one of its characteristick marks is an inability to act according to what we know is proper. This is so important a part, that I believe I shall not depart from correctness in affirming it to be the whole. Now, wherein this incapacity resides is the intended subject of this inquiry. The existence of the nervous fluid or animal spirits being supported by the unerring evidence of sense, having been observed by many very eminent physiologists, I shall espouse it, for the purpose of endeavouring to account for diffidence. It is probably secreted by the brain; however, that is its residence, from whence it descends into the nerves. The medula spinalis likewise, most likely possesses the same fluid, as I have never been informed it is exclusively found in those nerves which have their origin in the brain. This fluid being thus supplied, serves the important office of stimulating the muscles into action, and is the medium by which the will acts upon the body. Now as this fluid is such an essential agent in the animal economy, the magnitude of the effect I am about to attribute to it will of consequence appear less strange. I conceive the cause of diffidence is seated in the secreting organ of the nervous fluid; whether this fluid exudes through the coats of the arteries, or is absorbed by secerning ducts originating in the organ of its residence, is altogether immaterial to my purpose. It is sufficient it is secreted from the blood; either of those ways will suit my present design. This being rationally assented to, it is obvious both the orifices of the secerning vessels and the impetus of the blood, will have a very considerable effect upon its accumulation, and upon its quantity depends the effect I desire to elucidate. We find every stimulant action upon the system tends to remove diffidence. This is amply exemplified by receiving inebriating liquor into the stomach. Who has not experienced his own resolution invigorated thereby, or observed it upon others? This liquor, by its stimulating quality acts upon the circulation by the muscles, whereby a larger proportion of blood passes through the brain in a given time, and consequently an augmented portion of the nervous fluid is secreted.

But now to explain how this influences the resolution to remove or diminish diffidence, we must consider that diffidence results from an inability to act conformably with our judgment, *i. e.* in certain instances. This incapacity in corporeal action, is immediately the result of a deficiency of the nervous fluid. The will, in demanding the action of any part under its power, sends a portion of this fluid to give the warning and to furnish ability to perform the action. But as the strength of a muscle depends upon the energy or force with which it receives intelligence to act, and this energy being in proportion to the quantity of nervous fluid imparted, when the fluid thus directed is not sufficient to furnish the necessary tension of the muscle, it remains too flaccid, and the stimulus of the fluid only serves to excite spasmodick contraction in the part. This irregu-

lar action may with great propriety be called involuntary, because the will has not power to export the required quantity of the fluid to produce action consonant with its own dictates; and thus the characteristick of diffidence, so universally observable in corporeal action, is produced. The commotion of the mind may likewise be accounted for in the same manner. It arises partly from derangement in conceiving, and partly from deficiencies in compound action. Disordered conception is the effect of conscious incapacity to communicate our conceptions, and also the confusion attendant on an unsuccessful attempt to express them. For to begin with a strong apprehension that we shall be unable to accomplish must naturally, from the constitution of the mental system, counteract the performance. The mind is so framed, that an individual object is all we can at one moment attend to, and when the attention becomes divided between two subjects, just so much as this division is proportioned to each of them, will be their performance. A diffident man having, at the moment he undertakes to speak, two objects before his mind, his attention of course becomes divided, and he thereby disqualified to express himself. The subject he intends to speak upon, and the apprehension of being unable to perform it, are both before his attention at the same instant, and by this division is effected the many blunders in conversation which happen to bashful men. Silence likewise, so generally the concomitant of diffidence, originates from the same source, in conjunction with experience of incapacity to express our ideas. These things being present in the mind, Prudence teaches the advantage of keeping silence, rather than by attempting to speak to expose our own weakness. K.

For The Port Folio.

The fate of men of genius has ever excited the compassion of mankind, and surely no class of men have a more just claim to their pity. Their follies have been great, their misfortunes still greater. The history of their lives presents us with such a continued scene of miseries and misfortunes that we are almost induced to believe content and happiness are incompatible with a superiour genius. Among men of uncommon genius, the poets have generally been the most unfortunate; there have been but few among them who have not lived miserably and died neglected. This, perhaps, originates in the nature of their dispositions, and in the bent of their minds producing their particular pursuits. The necessary qualifications of the mind, to form a man of perfect and superiour genius are a *sound judgment*, a *strong memory*, and a *lively imagination*. To the writer of poetry, a solid judgment is not so essentially necessary as to the philosopher, the moralist, or the statesman. We find that the poet has generally possessed a retentive memory, a vivid imagination, and, too frequently, but a small portion of judgment in the common concerns of the world. Gifted with fine and noble feelings, and exalted and lively sentiments, they disregard the plebeian prudence of pecuniary acquisitions, and provide not, by their economy, against the various wants and exigencies of life. Destitute of the necessary comforts and conveniences of life, they must depend upon the favour of the rich and powerful, or upon the productions of their genius. Their former dependence is weak and fluctuating, their latter, too frequently incompetent to their support. When these uncertain means fail, they must suffer, and when reduced to beggary and want they are not sufficiently fortified by reason and philosophy to rise superiour to their sufferings. We require only a moderate acquaintance with the lives of the poets to verify these observations. One moment we will find them exulting in the greatest prosperity, and despising the groveling multitude; and the next immersed in the lowest abyss of misery, famishing in the streets of an extensive city, or degraded in the confinement of a loath-

some prison. One moment revelling in the dissipation and extravagance of the great; the next, reduced to the situation of the lowest vagabond. At one time clothed in the richest and most fashionable garments of their country; again, naked and destitute; exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, or to the severe and killing blasts of winter.

Not only England, but France, Italy, all the countries of Europe, have at different times presented these dreadful scenes to view. Those men who are esteemed the pride of their country, who are held up as models; who one moment delight an enlightened audience by the effusions of their genius, or please the judicious by their writings, the next, are left neglected or forlorn, exposed to the inhuman treatment of their creditors or permitted to wander destitute and half famished. This is not the colouring of the imagination; read the lives of the poet, the dramatist, or the historian, and you will find these observations verified. He who stands first on the list of fame, and first among unfortunate poets, is one, the relation of whose sufferings will be a reproach to the English nation, as long as his writings shall delight, or his memory be retained.

The impassioned authour of Venice Preserved—Otway. We must pity this unfortunate man, we must excuse his follies. He who can read the relation of his sufferings, or of his tragical end without shedding the tear of pity, or feeling the sensibility of human nature roused, must have lost all title to humanity. The finer feelings of his soul must have been absorbed. Otway—that man who had so often pleased an enlightened audience by his dramatick productions; he who could so exquisitely portray the feelings of the soul; he who, all nature and energy, discovered and described the various passions of mankind; he who had rolled in pleasure and whose company had been sought after with avidity, was at length neglected and forsaken, reduced to beggary and want, and forced to lurk in the most secret hiding places of London. The end of this unfortunate poet is truly lamentable, and no doubt, will always excite the pity of mankind. After experiencing a variety of misfortunes, he at last finished his existence by famine In that city where thousands who were mere machines in creation, lived in profusion and extravagance—there one of the finest dramatick writers England ever produced died in want. The life of Savage presents us with scenes no less afflicting and painful to the soul of sensibility. Sprung from noble origin, but the fruit of illicit commerce, he entered into life with prospects little flattering, and made his exit no less degrading. He rose into notice by the splendour of his genius, but no sooner became known than he was made the unfortunate subject of persecution; and that too, by a woman who bore the sacred title of mother. Pursued by this fiend, he experienced miseries no less great than those of Otway. Unfortunately engaged in a riot, which issued in murder, he was condemned by the laws of his country, by the verdict of an upright jury, to suffer a publick and disgraceful death, but through the benignity of the queen, snatched from the brink of ignominy, and restored to the arms of his country; he served as one of its brightest ornaments. This man, at one time, caressed by the great, and admitted, with pleasure, into every society, was finally plunged into the greatest misery and at length ended his days in a prison. Goldsmith, an authour universally admired for the correctness of his observations, for the ease and gaiety of his style, extolled as a poet, for the sentiment and harmony of his lines as a dramatick writer, for the happy choice of his plots, for the wit and humour of his dialogue, lived in beggary and want. After traversing the greatest part of Europe in extreme poverty, he returned to his native shore and lingered out a miserable existence, destitute and neglected. These are a few of the most conspicuous among the unfortunate men of genius

of whom England boasts. They are but a small portion of these unfortunate men whose miseries originated in the neglect of their countrymen. The lives of the wretched Chatterton, the sublime but unhappy MILTON, the gay, volatile, witty STEELE, the brilliant, discontented POPE, are too well known for me to expatiate upon. Spain boasts of but few men of genius, known as writers; and even these few though they have established their country's fame, have lived unnoticed and unrewarded. Among these shines forth, eminently conspicuous, Cervantes, at once the pride and reproach of his country! This man, the authour of a work which has stood the test of time; which for nearly three hundred years, has been read with pleasure and admiration, unlike works of a similar nature which enjoy a short lived reputation and then dwindle into oblivion. It still retains the station to which it has been raised by the universal and correct taste of mankind, and no doubt will, as long as wit and humour delight, and ridicule destroy the foibles of human nature. The authour of a work so highly prized was suffered by his countrymen to lose the most valuable portion of his life in confinement among barbarous and cruel people; and when restored to his country he was condemned to pass the remnant of his days without a recompense and unnoticed.

These few examples are sufficient to show that men of a fine genius have mostly been unfortunate and have too frequently experienced the neglect and hardships of the world. There have been but a few among them who have not met death prematurely and died through want of the common necessaries of life, when perhaps, had the fostering hand of charity been extended to them, the number of their days might have been increased, and the world benefitted by their additional productions. Even females who have distinguished themselves by the productions of their pens have not escaped the miseries which appear to be the inseparable concomitants of a fine genius. Charlotte, the daughter of Cibber the tragedian, at one time living in splendour and extravagance; surrounded by fawning crowds of sycophants and admirers attracted only by the glitter of show, and shortly after, reduced to indigence and penury; destitute of the common necessaries of life, neglected by her fellow beings, and lingering out a miserable existence in the filth and corruption of the suburbs of London, ought ever to excite the pity of mankind. The lives of Chamfort, of Goldoni the Italian dramatist, of a crowd of men of genius, present to our view scenes similar to those already described. Their talents, and the benefits and pleasures they have conferred upon mankind, command our respect; their misfortunes our pity and compassion. Even when in apparent ease and affluence, they wear only the appearance of happiness, and are ever doomed to be dependent on some haughty patron, the only road to whose heart is flattery, and the only title to whose favour is the most abject and servile submission; unable or unwilling, from their situation to assert the dignity and respectability to which their talents entitle them. To be thus exposed to the stings and arrows of outrageous fortune, to suffer the proud man's contumely and the oppressor's wrongs is truly a degradation of human nature. Why were we not present, we are ready to exclaim, to stretch forth the hand of charity, to snatch these unfortunate beings from their miseries, from hunger, famine, nakedness and distress, and restore them to comfort and happiness? But, alas! human nature, I fear, is every where the same, and it is only because they are beyond our reach that we thus utter our impotent expressions of benevolence. Even at this present moment, there are, perhaps, many similar objects who require our assistance, and we neglect to seek for them, but let us hope for more practical charity, and fervently pray that if ever among the sons of Columbia there should rise up (and I trust there will) men of genius, similar to those who have already flourished in Europe, that they may ne-

ver experience the neglect of their countrymen, but be received with open arms, and exalted beyond the reach of malice, beyond the wants and exigencies of life.

MORTIMER.

THE FINE ARTS.

[In the New-York papers we are delighted to find the ensuing article. The art of engraving has, of late, in this country, certainly made no very remote steps to excellence. Messrs. Collins and Perkins, proprietors of a new and valuable edition of the Sacred Scriptures, have very judiciously excited an emulation among the artists of their city, and the success which has crowned the competitors in this race of renown is well described and justly praised by Mr. TRUMBULL, whose fame as a painter is the theme not only of American but of British praise. We have a great curiosity to see a very copious collection of prints illustrative of the Bible and of the scenery of the Holy Land, than which no subjects are more capable of sublime and beautiful illustrations by the graphick art.]

Prize Medal.—With the view of exciting an honourable and useful competition among the engravers of our country, Messrs. Collins and Perkins, having selected several of the most eminent in their profession, gave to each a subject to engrave, and offered a gold medal for the best. When the plates were finished, they were submitted to the examination of the President and Directors of the American Academy of Arts. The opinion of the Board as to the collective merits of the whole, and the comparative excellence of several, is expressed in the following letter from Col. Trumbull.

We cannot here omit to remark that Messrs. Collins and Perkins, in consequence of this liberal effort to advance the art of engraving in our country, by calling forth the ablest exertions of the best talents, have procured for their correct and elegant Bible, a collection of plates much superiour to any before executed in America. If publishers, generally, would offer similar incentives to the exertion of the artist, while their own interest would be advanced one of the most valuable of the Fine Arts would be patronised and improved by the fostering hand of private munificence.

New-York, January 3, 1807.

Messrs. Collins & Perkins,

Gentlemen—Your letter of the 2d instant, together with the specimens of engravings executed in this country for your Bible, to which it referred, was duly received, and considered by the Directors of the Society of Arts.

I am charged, gentlemen, to convey to you the expression of the high satisfaction with which the Directors viewed these specimens of rapid improvement in the art of engraving; and to say that while all are justly to be regarded as honourable evidence of the exertions of the several competitors, they cannot refrain from expressing the very particular pleasure with which they viewed *The St. Paul*, *The Providence*, and *The Holy Family:* the works of native American artists (two of whom are unassisted by any advantage from foreign education) and all of which must be considered as unequivocal evidences of great talents, and sure promises of early and future excellence.

While the Directors bestow this justly merited applause upon the gentlemen who executed the three plates before mentioned, justice required that they should adjudge your medal to the engraver of *The Finding of Moses*, whose superiority on this first competition was naturally to be expected, from the superiour advantages which he has enjoyed in receiving his professional education in Europe.

The Directors hope that other opportunities of competition, laudable as that which you have given, will soon occur to call forth new exertions of genius and industry. And judging from the first exhibition, they cannot but indulge the hope of soon seeing this branch of the polite arts carried to a degree of perfection in America, which shall excite the surprise and even the emulation of Europe.—I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN TRUMBULL.

[Mr. Carpenter, the editor of *The People's Friend*, is a disciple of BURKE. In the following ingenious manner he prefaces a beautiful apologue of that great statesman when speaking in *his* tone of contempt of Lord Malmesbury's *ignominious* mission to the *republick* of *regicides*.]

It has been the fate of all great men, to afford subject-matter for a large addition to the catalogue of vulgar errours which pass current in the world. None has contributed to it more than the immortal Edmund Burke, who seems to have been the person upon whose qualities more than upon any other man, the ignorant, the vain, and the unlettered have differed most essentially from the ingenious, the wise and the learned. The former have thought that he only excelled in that kind of eloquence which rested on glittering diction, lively imagery and flights of fancy; and that out of those he was nothing: the latter knew the reverse. Take away from him his eloquence, said Mr. Fox, and he appears to greatest advantage: you would then find the solid wisdom, though the fine chasing were done away. On the other hand, Mr. Fox was supposed by the former, to be conspicuous chiefly for reasoning powers; but as to eloquent language, he was, for so great a man, held to be inferiour; while the judicious preferred his language very much to that of every other man. "I wish (said Burke) I wish that I could have my thoughts always expressed in the language of Mr. Fox."

The truth is, that Burke spoke and wrote in whatsoever style he pleased. "They may talk of his greatness as they please, (said a woollen manufacturer and farmer who came from a distant part of England, to consult him upon the improvement of that article) they may talk as they will, but I'll be cursed if that man was not bred a woolcomber." His state papers are held up as the most perfect models of simple yet vigorous conciseness; his letters of all the various kinds of epistolary excellence according to the persons to whom they were addressed. And for a plain, little story, simple, unadorned, yet replete with keen humour, we will set against any thing that has been written, the following, which appears in his third letter on a regicide, as a satire upon Lord Malmesbury's mission to France, and the result of it.

"An honest neighbour of mine is not altogether unhappy in the application of an old common story to the present occasion. It may be said of my friend, what Horace says of a neighbour of his, "*garrit aniles ex re fabellas.*" Conversing on this strange subject, he told me a current story of a simple English country squire, who was persuaded by certain *dilettanti* of his acquaintance to see the world, and to become knowing in men and manners. Among other celebrated places, it was recommended to him to visit Constantinople. He took their advice. After various adventures, not to our purpose to dwell upon, he happily arrived at that famous city. As soon as he had a little reposed himself from his fatigue, he took a walk into the streets; but he had not gone far, before "a malignant and a turban'd Turk" had his choler roused by the careless and assured air with which this infidel strutted about in the metropolis of true believers. In this temper, he lost no time in doing to our traveller the honours of the place. The Turk crossed over the way, and with perfect good will gave him two or three lusty kicks on the seat of honour. To resent or to return the compliment in Turkey was quite out of the question. Our traveller, since he could not otherwise acknowledge this kind of favour, received it with the best grace in the world: he made one of his ceremonious bows, and begged the kicking Mussulman "to accept his perfect assurances of high consideration." Our countryman was too wise to imitate Othello in the use of the dagger. He thought it better, as better it was, to assuage his bruised dignity with half a yard square of balmy diplomatick dyachylon. In the disasters of their friends, people are seldom wanting in a laudable patience. When they are such as do

not threaten to end fatally, they become even matter of pleasantry. The English fellow-travellers of our sufferer, finding him a little out of spirits, entreated him not to take so slight a business so seriously. They told him it was the custom of the country; that every country had its customs; that the Turkish manners were a little rough; but that in the main the Turks were a good-natured people; that what would have been a deadly affront any where else, was only a little freedom there; in short, they told him to think no more of the matter, and to try his fortune in another *promenade*. But the squire though a little clownish had some homebred sense. What! have I come at all this expense and trouble all the way to Constantinople only to be kicked? Without going beyond my own stable, my groom, for half a crown, would have kicked me to my heart's content. I don't mean to stay in Constantinople eight and forty hours, nor ever to return to this rough, good-natured people that have their own customs.

"In my opinion the 'squire was in the right. He was satisfied with his first ramble and his first injuries. But reason of state and common sense are two things. If it were not for this difference it might not appear of absolute necessity, after having received a certain quantity of buffetings in advance, that we should send a peer of the realm to the scum of the earth to collect the debt to the last farthing; and to receive, with infinite aggravation, the same scorns which had been paid to our supplication through a commoner; but, it was proper, I suppose, that the whole of our country, in all its order, should have a share in the indignity; and, as in reason, that the higher orders should touch the larger proportion."

From Burke's Maxims.

CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT OF ENGLAND.

(Concluded from the last number.)

Our education is so formed as to confirm and fix this impression. Our education is in a manner wholly in the hands of ecclesiasticks, and in all stages from infancy to manhood. Even when our youth, leaving schools and universities, enter that most important period of life which begins to link experience and study together, and when with that view they visit other countries, instead of old domesticks whom we have seen as governours to principal men from other parts, three-fourths of those who go abroad with our young nobility and gentlemen are ecclesiasticks; not as austere masters, nor as mere followers; but as friends and companions of a graver character, and not seldom persons as well born as themselves. With them, as relations, they most commonly keep up a close connexion through life. By this connexion we conceive that we attach our gentlemen to the church; and we liberalize the church by an intercourse with the leading characters of the country.

So tenacious are we of the old ecclesiastical modes and fashions of institution, that very little alteration has been made in them since the fourteenth or fifteenth century; adhering in this particular, as in all things else, to our old settled maxim, never entirely nor at once to depart from antiquity. We found these old institutions, on the whole, favourable to morality and discipline; and we thought they were susceptible of amendment without altering the ground. We thought they were capable of receiving and meliorating, and above all of preserving, the accessions of science and literature, as the order of Providence should successively produce them. And after all, with this gothick and monkish education (for such it is in the ground-work) we may put in our claim to as ample and as early a share in all the improvements in science, in arts, and in literature, which have illuminated and adorned the modern world, as any other nation in Europe: we think one main cause of this improvement was our not despising the patrimony of knowledge which was left us by our forefathers.

It is from our attachment to a church establishment that the English

nation did not think it wise to entrust that great fundamental interest of the whole to what they trust no part of their civil or military publick service, that is, to the unsteady and precarious contribution of individuals. They go further. They certainly never have suffered and never will suffer the fixed estate of the church to be converted into a pension, to depend on the treasury, and to be delayed, withheld, or perhaps to be extinguished by fiscal difficulties; which difficulties may sometimes be pretended for political purposes, and are in fact often brought on by the extravagance, negligence, and rapacity of politicians. The people of England think that they have constitutional motives, as well as religious, against any project of turning their independent clergy into ecclesiastical pensioners of state. They tremble for their liberty, from the influence of a clergy dependent on the crown; they tremble for the publick tranquillity from the disorders of a factious clergy, if it were made to depend upon any other than the crown. They therefore made their church, like their King and their nobility, independent.

From the united considerations of religious and constitutional policy, from their opinion of a duty to make a sure provision for the consolation of the feeble and the instruction of the ignorant, they have incorporated and identified the estate of the church with the mass of *private property*, of which the state is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but the guardian only and the regulator. They have ordained that the provision of this establishment might be as stable as the earth on which it stands, and should not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions.

The men of England, the men, I mean, of light and leading in England, whose wisdom (if they have any) is open and direct, would be ashamed, as of a silly deceitful trick, to profess any religion in name, which by their proceedings they appear to contemn. If by their conduct (the only language that rarely lies) they seemed to regard the great ruling principle of the moral and the natural world, as a mere invention to keep the vulgar in obedience, they apprehend that by such a conduct they would defeat the politick purpose they have in view. They would find it difficult to make others believe in a system to which they manifestly gave no credit themselves. The christian statesmen of this land would indeed first provide for the *multitude;* because it is the *multitude;* and is therefore, as such, the first object in the ecclesiastical institution, and in all institutions. They have been taught that the circumstance of the gospel's being preached to the poor, was one of the great tests of its true mission. They think, therefore, that those do not believe it who do not take care it should be preached to the poor. But as they know that charity is not confined to any one description, but ought to apply itself to all men who have wants, they are not deprived of a due and anxious sensation of pity to the distresses of the miserable great. They are not repelled through a fastidious delicacy, at the stench of their arrogance and presumption, from a medicinal attention to their mental blotches and running sores. They are sensible, that religious instruction is of more consequence to them than to any others; from the greatness of the temptation to which they are exposed; from the important consequences that attend their faults; from the contagion of their ill example; from the necessity of bowing down the stubborn neck of their pride and ambition to the yoke of moderation and virtue; from a consideration of the fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what imports men most to know, which prevails at courts, and at the head of armies, and in senates, as much as at the loom and in the field.

The English people are satisfied, that to the great the consolations of religion are as necessary as its instructions. They too are among the unhappy. They feel personal pain and domestick sorrow. In these they have no privilege, but are subject to

pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this sovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which being less conversant about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diversified by infinite combinations in the wild and unbounded regions of imagination. Some charitable dole is wanting to these, our often very unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing on earth to hope or fear; something to relieve in the killing languor and over-laboured lassitude of those who have nothing to do; something to excite an appetite to existence in the pallid satiety which attends on all pleasures which may be bought, where nature is not left to her own process, where even desire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight; and no interval, no obstacle, is interposed between the wish and the accomplishment.

The people of England know how little influence the teachers of religion are likely to have with the wealthy and powerful of long standing, and how much less with the newly fortunate, if they appear in a manner no way assorted to those with whom they must associate, and over whom they must even exercise, in some cases, something like an authority. What must they think of that body of teachers, if they see it in no part above the establishment of their domestick servants? If the poverty were voluntary there might be some difference. Strong instances of self-denial operate powerfully on our minds; and a man who has no wants has obtained great freedom and firmness, and even dignity. But as the mass of any description of men are but men, and their poverty cannot be voluntary, that disrespect which attends upon all lay poverty, will not depart from the ecclesiastical. Our provident constitution has therefore taken care that those who are to instruct presumptuous ignorance, those who are to be censors over insolent vice, should neither incur their contempt, nor live upon their alms; nor will it tempt the rich to a neglect of the true medicine of their minds. For these reasons, whilst we provide first for the poor, and with a parental solicitude, we have not relegated religion (like something we were ashamed to show) to obscure municipalities or rustick villages. No! we will have her to exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments. We will have her mixed throughout the whole mass of life, and blended with all the classes of society. The people of England will show to the haughty potentates of the world, and to their talking sophisters, that a free, a generous, an informed nation, honours the high magistrates of its church; that it will not suffer the insolence of wealth and titles, or any other species of proud pretension, to look down with scorn upon what they look up to with reverence; nor presume to trample on that acquired personal nobility, which they intend always to be, and which often is, the fruit, not the reward, (for what can be the reward?) of learning, piety, and virtue. They can see, without pain or grudging, an archbishop precede a duke. They can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year; and cannot conceive why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl, or that squire; although it may be true, that so many dogs and horses are not kept by the former, and fed with the victuals which ought to nourish the children of the people. It is true, the whole church revenue is not always employed, and to every shilling, in charity; nor perhaps ought it; but something is generally so employed. It is better to cherish virtue and humanity, by leaving much to free will, even with some loss to the object, than to attempt to make men mere machines and instruments of a political benevolence. The world on the whole will gain by a liberty without which virtue cannot exist.

When once the commonwealth has

established the estates of the church as property, it can, consistently, hear nothing of the more or the less. Too much and too little are treason against property. What evil can arise from the quantity in any hand, whilst the supreme authority has the full, sovereign superintendence over this, as over any property, to prevent every species of abuse; and, whenever it notably deviates, to give to it a direction agreeable to the purposes of its institution.

In England most of us conceive that it is envy and malignity towards those who are often the beginners of their own fortune and not a love of the self-denial and mortification of the ancient church, that makes some look askance at the distinctions and honours, and revenues, which, taken from no person, are set apart for virtue. The ears of the people of England are distinguishing. They hear these men speak abroad. Their tongue betrays them. Their language is in the *patois* of fraud; in the cant and gibberish of hypocrisy. The people of England must think so when these praters affect to carry back the clergy to that primitive evangelick poverty, which, in the spirit, ought always to exist in them, (and in us too, however we may like it) but in the thing must be varied, when the relation of that body to the state is altered; when manners, when modes of life, when indeed the whole order of human affairs has undergone a total revolution. We shall believe those reformers to be then honest enthusiasts, not as now we think them cheats and deceivers, when we see them throwing their own goods into common and submitting their own persons to the austere discipline of the early church.

With these ideas rooted in their minds, the commons of Great-Britain, in the national emergencies, will never seek their resource from the confiscation of the estates of the church and poor. Sacrilege and proscription are not among the ways and means of our committee of supply. The Jews in Change-alley have not yet dared to hint their hopes of a mortgage on the revenues belonging to the See of Canterbury. I am not afraid that I shall be disavowed, when I assure you that there is not *one* publick man in this kingdom, whom you would wish to quote; no, not one of any party or description, who does not reprobate the dishonest, perfidious, and cruel confiscation which the national assembly has been compelled to make of that property which it was their first duty to protect.

It is with the exultation of a little national pride I tell you, that those amongst us who have wished to pledge the societies of Paris in the cup of their abominations, have been disappointed. The robbery of your church has proved a security to the possessions of ours. It has roused the people. They see with horrour and alarm that enormous and shameless act of proscription. It has opened, and will more and more open, their eyes upon the selfish enlargement of mind, and the narrow liberality of sentiment of insidious men, which, commencing in close hypocrisy and fraud, have ended in open violence and rapine. At home we behold similar beginnings. We are on our guard against similar conclusions.

FLORUS.

L. Annæus Julius Florus was born a little more than a century after our Saviour, and composed an abridgment of the Roman history till the time of Augustus. He has the singular merit of having included in one small volume, in four books, the annals of seven hundred years, without having omitted a single important fact. The conspiracy of Catiline is recounted in two pages, and yet nothing essential is omitted. His style is so florid as to have the appearance of poetry in deranged measure. He has all the declamation of an orator; and when we look for a correct recital of the history of the Romans, we find a warm panegyrick on many of their achievements.

On this account Florus must be read without that confidence which we repose in many other authours. He is careless in chronology; and being desirous of stating such circumstances as ought to have occurred on particular occasions, he sometimes deviates from the scrupulous accuracy of historical truth.

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VELLEIUS PATERCULUS.

Velleius Paterculus lived in the time of Tiberius, was of a respectable family, and served several campaigns under the emperour. He wrote a compendium of the history of Greece and Rome, from the earliest period to his own age. He is a useful authour, and not deficient in ease or elegance of style. He is remarkably mild in his censures, but most unaccountably extravagant in his praise of the Cæsars. Augustus is a god; and Sejanus, the fawning and cruel minister of Tiberius is extolled with encomiums which are due only to virtue. The objection to his partiality is confined to the latter part of his work, and is common to many historians, whose prejudices or whose fears disguise or suppress their opinions. Paterculus has a happy and beautiful brevity of narration, which in a small compass contains all the graces of style, and is embellished with wise maxims and useful morals.

Whatever other historians have recorded will be found in this writer, who possesses in a singular degree the merit of perspicuity.

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CORNELIUS NEPOS.

Of Cornelius Nepos we have received no authentick account, except that he was born at Hostilia, near the banks of the river Po, in the reign of Augustus, and, amongst other literary characters, was honoured by the Imperial patronage. The work which has reached posterity is his lives of illustrious Greeks and Romans. The style of it displays the elegance of the age in which he lived; and while it contains a summary of their principal actions, it is replete with judicious reflections upon them. He abounds in taste, but not in force and strength. In reporting events he does not enter into the details which mark the characteristick traits of the actors, and which distinguish the perspicacity of the historian.

Rome had not yet its Plutarch.

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SUETONIUS.

Somewhat more than a century after the christian era, C. Tranquillus Suetonius was the secretary of the Emperour Adrian. He has left a history of the twelve Cæsars, and is considered scrupulously exact and methodical. He omits nothing which concerns the person whose life he writes; and is a reporter of actions, but not a painter of the manners. He is a pleasant authour to consult, for he is a detailer of anecdotes. In reflections he is very sparing, contenting himself with recounting events without feeling or exciting any emotion. The office of a narrator satisfies his ambition; and from the little interest he takes respecting the conduct of his heroes, he has attained the praise of strict impartiality.

The character of the Emperours is no where more justly represented, but the description of their vices has been thought unnecessarily minute.

The language of Suetonius is elegant; his narration easy and perspicuous.

Nature had been kind to him in her endowments, and he acknowledged her kindness by the industry with which he applied to his education.

An acquaintance with these minor historians is expected of the general scholar.

Some beauties will please, and some information will instruct him in them all; but after he has consulted them for the gratification of his curiosity, or the refreshment of his memory as to particular facts, he will perceive, that his taste can alone be duly formed, and his knowledge sufficiently amplified by a frequent and attentive perusal of the three accomplished historians of Rome.

OF THE ORIENTAL LEARNING AND PHILOSOPHY.

Man, in his rude and uncivilized state, has no great exercise of reason. To the numerous objects that press around him, his internal senses seem not equally awake with the external. No examination into causes from effects even the most surprising; he feels, but reflects not. His passions, on some occasions, may be strongly alarmed and put in agitation; but these suggest nothing to the reasoning powers, which seem to lie dormant in this dominion of nature and instinct; or, if they awake and try to form conclusions, they start, as from a hideous dream, with all the motley images that a distempered imagination can muster up.

In this state, mankind have no notion of a Deity, except it be from tradition; and this, as it existed in the first nations, if we except the Jews, was strangely absurd and wide of the truth; till we find afterwards, as men advanced in society and knowledge, a faint light dawn, that led them to juster ideas.

And this was chiefly effected by the philosophers, endued by Providence in different parts of the world; no doubt to usher in and further its own mighty and inscrutable designs.

A Persian Zoroaster, a Chinese Confucius, a Grecian Socrates: even the Celtick Druids and Indian Bramins, in different ages, and in different countries, have all been instrumental in this way, in many respects, perhaps, which we cannot see.

All these men at the same time, that they were excellent moralists, were also deep inspectors into nature; and from an attentive survey of her wonderful operations, were naturally led to the consideration of a first cause.

In reality, this study of nature was prior to the other, and it was not till men had made pretty good advances in it, that they were led to the study of its authour.

It likewise deserves to be remarked, that among the Gentile nations, not only theology and phylosophy originated in an advanced state of society, when men had leisure and curiosity to push the speculative sciences as far as they could go; but that in general the way to these last was paved by the precession of the necessary arts.

The Egyptians knew nothing of astronomy or the celestial phænomena, till they were obliged, by reason of the annual inundations of the Nile, to learn mensuration, in order to ascertain their property. Upon this early and necessary initiation, they took their ground, and mounted, by gradual steps in the geometrical scale, from the mensuration of lands to that of pyramids; till, having got thus far on their way, they looked still higher. and by an easy transition applied those calculations to the motions of the heavenly bodies, which they had formerly applied with success to the pyramids and the Nile.

From some such accidental cause, the sciences seem to have taken rise very early in the east, and probably at a date prior to their rise in Egypt; though I doubt much, if in those regions they were ever prosecuted to such advantage.

Astronomy, more particularly, seems to owe its invention to the Orientals. We find Zoroaster the Persian excelling in magick, and conversing with the stars, at a very early period. The Arabian and Chaldean shepherds were a kind of astrologers by profession, and gave those names to many of the stars which they still retain.

The doctrine of the metempsychosis, which the Egyptians adopted so readily into their religion, and which Pythagoras afterwards imported thence into Greece, was, beyond all doubt, of eastern extraction. This opinion, very probably, arose from some remaining impressions of the fall of man, that still kept hold of the minds of those that lived so near the time and scene in which it happened. And, as the origin of evil has been a matter of curious disquisition among the inquisitive of all ages; so, among those subtle philosophers of the east, who had an uncommon turn for such dark speculations, any hypothesis that served to remove the difficulty but one step farther back, would be gladly embraced, concerning a topick of all others the most abstruse, and the most incomprehensible to the human mind.

It is not unlikely, that the building of Babel in the plains of Shinar, which took place immediately after the flood, first set men the example of building in those parts; and that even the Egyptians might have borrowed the first idea of their pyramids, and other stupendous works, from the same original.

In general, it may be observed, from the immense structure of Babel, the magnificence of the Babylonian walls, and the stateliness of the Egyptian pyramids, that the luxury and pride of these ancient nations led them to works of vastly greater pomp and expense than any the moderns can boast of. Yet, from these very buildings, though astonishingly great, but defective in elegance, we may guess the taste of those times to have been gross, and the genius rude.

Indeed it is presumable that the fine arts naturally associate together, from the near relation in which they all stand to one another; and as we have never heard of renowned poets or statuaries among the Babylonians, that consequently they could never have a very elegant taste in any other of the polite arts. Magnificence and a pompousness of manner they might possess; but, like the modern Chinese, they would show in their

designs more of the monstrous extravagance of art, than of the simple and pleasing dignity of nature.

Compare to those immense eastern works, the Grecian architecture of later date; the noble remains of which, at Balbeck and Palmyra, in the islands of the Archipelago, and in many parts of Greece, excite, to this hour, our highest admiration.

The beautiful remains of ancient painting, statuary, medals, and gems, besides those of architecture, lately found upon the discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, all of them in the purest Greek style, still farther confirm our admiration of the taste and genius of that wonderful people.

On the other hand it must be granted, that the Greeks themselves, with all their ingenuity, derived many resources either more immediately from the Babylonians, or mediately from the Egyptians and Phœnicians. We have already mentioned the metempsychosis as owing its origin to the same quarter, as also physicks, astronomy, and moral philosophy.

A certain mediocrity, however, of abilities, has, in general, characterized the nations of the East from remotest time; the natural consequence, no doubt, of their climate and soil, which warm, relax, and dispose to dissipation. Hence those nations, though naturally ingenious, have been always retarded in their progress in the arts; especially in those of the intellectual or finer kind that require any great or persevering exertions.

A certain length, indeed, they have gone in most or all of these, but they have, for the most part, shown more ardour than ability, and more ingenuity than judgment or solidity.

The Arabs have been always much the same in character; alert, active, ingenious, nimble in horsemanship, and addicted to plunder. At one period, (during the califate), they either invented or improved several curious sciences, such as algebra, chemistry, medicine, which, along with other assistances, aided to rekindle the lamp of learning in Europe, after it had been extinguished for many centuries during the dark and Gothick ages.

The ancient Persians were famous for astronomy and other sciences; dexterous in archery; ambitious and restless in war. They are still ingenious in the arts; excel in poetry, but retain, in a great measure, their pristine effeminacy and love of pleasure.

The Indians throughout the whole extent of the Mogul empire, as well as in the kingdoms of Ava, Siam, and Pegu, are universally characterized, as particularly ingenious in the nicer mechanick arts, such as weaving, colouring, japanning. They are in general a mild and harmless people, excepting the Malayese, who are said to be treacherous, and addicted to plunder.

Porcelane-making is peculiar to the Chinese, who are indeed still more active than the Indians, more moderate in their passions; and, with some exceptions, are, perhaps, the most enlightened, virtuous, and industrious of all pagan nations.

Upon the whole, from the heat of the climate, and the luxuriance of the soil, which incline to voluptuousness, these eastern nations are in general luxurious, but withal quick and lively, and in a certain degree industrious and active. Their genius, indeed, is moderate, being more acute than profound, more shrewd than solid. Like their bodies, their minds are but of middling ability. Neither Newtons nor Shakspeares have ever arisen among them; few great warriours; their philosophy has been more of the moral than of the physical kind; and though they may have excelled in the softer sorts of poetry, it is probable that they want force and elevation for its more grand and noble exertions.

Moreover, if we take a view of the different nations that lie more to the north, we shall find them, if not more effeminate and luxurious, at least more indolent and inactive than those just now mentioned. The Asiatick Turks, particularly, come under this description. Whether their spirits are naturally flatter, or that their continual use of opium, and the character of their religion, all contribute to this supine solemnity, is hard to determine: but they are grave and silent in the extreme. Their indolence is excessive, and their ignorance equal to their indolence.

In this torpid state of ignorance and insipidity lie buried their large possessions in Asia Minor, Greece, Egypt, Barbary, Syria, part of Arabia, and the Holy Land.

Such, and so successful has the Koran been, (when joined to the above causes and the despotism and barbarity of Tartar-genius) in banishing arts and humanity from a very considerable portion of the habitable globe.

In fine, the northern nations of Asia, have been remarkable for nothing but a bold ferocious spirit, a genius for war, and sudden and destructive invasions of the countries around them.

Some exceptions, however, must be made to this remark. Gengis-Khan and Tamerlane were both as eminent for their magnificence and encouragement of learning, as for their renown in war. Enriched by the spoils of the East, these great conquerours reared cities in deserts, and tried to fix the roving Tartar, by introducing architecture, letters, and the other fine arts.

But this light was only a flash, which for a moment illumined, without dispelling that thick cloud of ignorance which has always

covered these dreary and inhospitable regions. This country of Tartary, of immense extent, and far larger than all Europe, is the same over which wandered the ancient Scythians, the native hive, whence issued, in successive swarms, those barbarous hoards that overwhelmed the Roman empire, peopled the northern parts of Europe, gave emperours to China and Indoston, and detached colonies to plant a new world in the western continent.

It may therefore with justice be concluded, that though the arts and sciences have taken their rise in the East, and have thence travelled westward, first to Egypt and afterwards to Greece and Rome, that they have generally improved in their progress in proportion to the nature of the soil and climate, and the ardour with which they have been pursued; that neither the warmer nor colder regions have been greatly favourable to their culture, the former relaxing, the latter contracting the human faculties; that in the temperate climes of Europe they have flourished to most advantage; that it is probable they will thence migrate to the western continent in order to enlighten a new world; that they will finally spread themselves over the most savage tribes, and, with their sacred influence, polish and improve the most uncivilized nations.

VARIETY.

In the rough blast heaves the billow,
In the light air waves the willow;
Every thing of moving kind
VARIES with the veering wind:
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

Sombre tale, and satire witty,
Sprightly glee, and doleful ditty,
Measur'd sighs, and roundelay,
Welcome all! BUT DO NOT STAY.
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against not only our reason but our instinct; and that it cannot prevail long.

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No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition. But, though no man can draw a stroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkness are upon the whole tolerably distinguishable.

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Terrour is not always the effect of force; and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource; for, conciliation failing, force remains; but force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness; but they can never be begged as alms, by an impoverished and defeated violence.

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The two following ballads are the ingenious productions of Dibdin, who as a song-writer of a peculiar class has displayed more invention and wit than any of his contemporaries. We are not positive that the last has not appeared before, but it displays so much humour and character that it will not be a sacrifice of time, to listen to it again.

Ingenious bards have often tried
Man's best resemblance to define;
I hold (nor startle child of pride)
Our likeness is the race canine!

'Gainst this let no one set his face,
I go on sure and certain ground;
Where can throughout the human race
More strict fidelity be found?

The dog, if needful, to his death,
Demonstrating what honour is,
For his protection yields his breath,
And saves that life which cherished his.

Nor can this any stigma fix
At which the nicest ear may start;
But shows, that though they play dogs' tricks
Men have fidelity at heart.

Sly dogs, queer dogs, mankind we name,
Then who my thesis shall condemn,
For, if their titles be the same,
They must ape us, or we ape them.

Pug dogs, that amble through the street
To crops we aptly may compare;
And every female that you meet
Can tell you who the puppies are.

For sad dogs one can scarcely stir,
Of spaniels there's a catalogue;
The dogged cynick is a cur,
A tar 's the English mastiff dog.

With dogs such dashing sportsmen suit
As instinct use, but never think;
And yet the dog 's the wiser brute,
For he can neither smoke nor drink!

Bullies are whelps that growl and snarl
And quarrel loud, but never fight;
Mongrels are Envy's sons that snarl,
And show their teeth—but cannot bite.

The terrier the undertaker hits
The Greek 's a fox that skips and cogs,
Comical dogs are smarts and wits,
And topers are all jolly dogs.

At Wapping I landed and call'd to hail Mog,
She had just shaped her course to the play;
Of two rums and one water I ordered my grog,
And to speak her soon stood under way.
But the Haymarket I for old Drury mistook
Like a lubber so raw and so soft;
Half a George handed out, at the change did not look,
Manned the rattlins and went up aloft.

As I mounted to one of the uppermost tiers
With many a coxcomb and flirt,
Such a damnable squalling saluted my ears
I thought there 'd been somebody hurt;
But the devil a bit, 'twas your outlandish rips,
Singing out with their lanterns of jaws,
You 'd a swore you 'd been taking of one of those trips
'Mongst the Caffrees or wild Catabaws.

What's the play Ma'am, says I, to a good-natur'd tit.
The Play! 'tis The *Uproar*, you quiz,
My timbers, cried I, the right name on't you've hit,
For the devil an uproar it is:
For they pipe and they squeel, now alow, now aloft,
If it wa'n't for the petticoat gear
With their squeaking, so Mollyish, tender and soft,
One should scarcely know Ma'am from Mounseer.

Next at kicking and dancing they took a long spell,
All springing and bounding so neat,
And spessiously one curious Madamoiselle
Oh! she daintily handled her feet.
But she hopped and she sprawled and she spun round so queer,
'Twas, you see, rather oddish to me,
And so I sung out, pray be decent my dear,
Consider I'm just come from sea.

T 'ant an Englishman's taste to have none of these goes,
So away to the playhouse I'll jog,
Leaving all your fine Bantams and Ma'am Parisoes,
For old Billy Shakspeare and Mog.
So I made for the theatre and hail'd my dear spouse;
She smiled as she saw me approach,
And when I 'd shook hands and saluted her bows
We to Wapping set sail in a coach.

During the time that martial law was in force in Ireland, and the people were prohibited from having fire-arms in their possession, some mischievous varlets gave information that a Mr. Scanton of Dublin, had *three mortars* in his house. A magistrate with a party of dragoons in his train, surrounded the house and demanded in the King's name, that the *mortars* should be delivered to him. Mr. Scanton, who is a respectable apothecary, immediately produced them; adding, that as they were useless without the *pestles*, these also were at His Majesty's service.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

For The Port Folio.

Verses occasioned by the absence of Cara.

Who now will court the soothing breeze,
That fans the pensive night,
When Cynthia pours through waving trees,
A flood of trembling light?

Who now will hear the cascade play,
And riv'let murmur by?
Or view the charms of setting day
Upon the western sky?

Thou gentle cascade cease to play!
And cease to wave ye trees!
When lovely Cara is away,
Your charms no longer please!

No more let Cynthia o'er the woods,
Her silv'ry lustre shed!
Nor moon-beams dance on quiv'ring flood,
Since lovely Cara 's fled!

ANNIUS.

EPIGRAMS.

Alike in temper, and in life,
A drunken husband, sottish wife;
She a scold, a bully he——
The devil 's in't they dont agree.

You sell your wife's rich jewels, lace and clothes,
The price once paid, away the purchase goes;
But she a better bargain proves, I'm told
Still sold returns and still is to be sold.

Thus spoke the humorous *Bowsy* from his bed,
When a late visit some rude villains made,
What seek ye here, my friends, at midnight pray,
The devil a thing can I see at mid-day.

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